000 "Sprin ak'or!" said the people, "Clouds are gathering!"

651 /195/ After the autumn labors had been substantially completed, and the grain had been threshed and brought in, Namgyal traveled to Leh in order to pay in to the state treasury the taxes gathered by him as gopa. At the same time he wanted to sell a foal that he had reared. He likewise had to make some purchases at the Leh bazaar.

The business matters in Leh were soon completed. The tax computation was found to be correct, in many cases the unpaid taxes were granted a delay, and for this time the Wasir, a cultured, understanding Hindu of high caste, dispensed with the customary strong measures of coercion brought to bear upon negligent taxpayers. He praised Namgyal's wise measures taken during the time of distress. He knew and valued the Dragshos as a reliable and industrious official. The beautiful young horse which Namgyal brought for sale to the bazaar found a buyer in no time, and so Namgyal prepared himself for the journey home.

674 Then it happened during his last stroll through the streets of
625 Leh that he unexpectedly found himself amidst a throng of excited people. He heard shouts: "Skunma! Skunma! Thief! Thief! Hold the thief!" A tussle, jostling to and fro, shouting, swearing, and four or five men were seized by the native policemen and taken away, then the crowd dispersed. Namgyal went to his temporary lodgings in order to prepare himself for the journey back to Kalatse. He was just about to saddle his horse when a native policemen, an Indian, came and took him to the police station. There he was received by the Indian police sergeant Gobinath who had the most evil reputation for his arbitrariness, corruptibility, and cruelty. Namgyal asked why he had been arrested--they had handcuffed him immediately--whereupon Gobinath answered, he himself should know that best, otherwise they would soon make it clear to him. Now Gobinath led Namgyal into the police prison where he personally interrogated him. He, Namgyal, was strongly suspected of having committed a bold robbery, or at least of having helped with it. It was not till this moment that Namgyal learned from the remarks of Gobinath that the dwelling of an Indian merchant on the bazaar had been broken into. The thief had broken a hole through the poorly constructed brick wall from the neighboring grounds /196/, and in this manner he had entered the room concerned. He had stolen turquoises, pearls, and silver to the value of several hundreds of rupees.

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Namgyal busying himself in a suspicious manner around this particular wall of the house. The witness, he said, was even a lama from Kalatse. Namgyal now soon learned that his accuser was the lama Dondrub, the man who had for a long time been persecuting Namgyal with slanders and hostile acts, and who had also accused him of bribery and embezzlement of tax money, and the like. This he did as the revenge for the fact that Namgyal had said to him publicly to his face that he was charging the people prices that were far too high for the household ceremonies that he performed: that he lent grain and money at usurious rates of interest, and that he led an immoral life. The lama Dondrub had chanced to meet Namgyal near this house as he was walking by himself, and he believed to have found an opportunity with this to rid himself of an inconvenient observer for awhile, in case his accusations brought Namgyal into jail. It later came to light that the lama had put a sum of money into Gobinath's hand, for which the latter promised "to do the thing right."

In the police prison Namgyal first of all witnessed how Gobinath 625
interrogated in turn four "suspects," and when they did not confess, how he whipped them in the most violent manner, tortured them with thumb screws (167) and other tools in the most pitiless way, in order

167. In Greater Tibet, in the realm of the Dalai Lama, even today the most horrible tortures are applied for the forcing of confessions. Of all the devilish inventions of the torturers we will only mention here, by way of suggestion, the following: thumb screws, whipping, drops of melted sealing wax on the bare parts of the body of the accused. The tortured victim is prevented from sleeping by means of two little iron hooks connected by a string which are hooked into the lower eyelids and the skin of the belly so that the lids are pulled down and cannot be closed. Many kinds of executions are correspondingly cruel.

to wring a confession out of them. In between he would frequently take a swallow from a brandy bottle that was standing by. Namgyal observed how Gobinath suddenly interrupted the torturing of one of his victims when the latter called to him amidst howls that he had something important to communicate. After the tortured man had then whispered something to his torturer the latter freed his victim. In Tibet, too, money loosens bonds.

625 661 After all four accused men had been "interrogated" in this cruel manner, during which none confessed the theft, it was Namgyal's turn. He knew that he had nothing good to expect from Gobinath. Two years before this police officer had once come up to him and said to him confidentially /197/ that he was in a position to procure the post of district official for him (Namgyal), if he would give him one hundred rupees. After all, Namgyal knew, he said, that this was a "good post." He also knew how much influence he (Gobinath) had with the Wasir. Namgyal had refused the offer in no uncertain terms and had brought the matter to the attention of the Tahsildar, the assistant to the Wasir. The latter had warned Gobinath to be "careful." One crow does not peck out the other crow's eyes. /Birds of a feather flock together/ Gobinath knew too much about his superior and his doings. But Gobinath learned of Namgyal's notification and waited for a long time for an opportunity to avenge himself on his opponent. He now believed to have found this opportunity.

625 Gobinath was just about to make preparations for whipping Namgyal, when in the last minute a messenger from the Wasir arrived with the order to free Namgyal. The messenger said that Namgyal had nothing to do with the theft. The lonpo (nobleman) from D[illegible], who was related to the Dragshos, had, he said, proved without a doubt that Namgyal had been in his quarters at the time of the theft, something which could also be testified to by others. Thus Gobinath, to his anger, had to let Namgyal go, and the Lama Dondrub had to go away disappointed, with the two witnesses who had consented to swear for a few annas that they had seen Namgyal at the scene of the crime immediately after the theft (168). Gobinath released Namgyal with

168. See not 431

the threat that he would find another opportunity to pay him back for his deeds. The thief had still not been tracked down; however many "suspects" were interrogated and tortured; finally all of them had to be released again for lack of proof.

787 Upon the advice of some Buddhistic lower officials, the Wasir then seized upon an unusual measure. He questioned the Lhapas (demon priests) of the monastery Mashro which lies beyond the Indus River at the foot of a gigantic, glacier crowned mountain-mass. Some of the monks of the lower orders there occupied themselves, after they had been so designated by lot, in a special way, with the exorcising